

Notes from the Quarterly Meeting of the Everglades Technical Oversight Committee (TOC)

April 28, 2015

South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406

TOC Representatives:

Juli LaRock, TOC Chair, SFWMD	Frank Powell, FDEP
John Barkett, Special Master (<i>by phone</i>)	Sean Smith, USACE
Melissa Martin, Refuge	Donatto Surratt, ENP

Note: *This meeting was recorded by a court reporter and copies are available for purchase; for more information, contact Florida Court Reporting (561-689-0999). Handouts and presentations are available on the TOC website (www.sfwmd.gov/toc). A video of the meeting is available online at <http://sfwmd.ig2.com/Citizens/Media.aspx>.*

10:00 a.m. **1. TOC Opening Business** – Juli LaRock, SFWMD

1A. Welcome, Announcements, and Identification of Phone Participants

Juli LaRock called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. Phone participants introduced themselves.

1B. Agenda Modifications and Documents Available on the TOC Website

Juli LaRock reviewed the agenda and the list of recently posted files available on the TOC website. There were no requests for changes to the agenda.

1C. Approval of Meeting Summary for February 4, 2015

The TOC did not request any changes, and approved finalizing the draft meeting summary.

Associated Online Documents:

- [Agenda for April 28, 2015 meeting](#)
- [Draft Notes from February 4, 2014 meeting](#)

10:10 a.m. **2. WY2014 Annual Shark River Slough Compliance** – Stuart Van Horn, SFWMD

Stuart Van Horn presented the final, non-provisional Shark River Slough data for Water Year 2014 compliance. The final TP flow-weighted mean concentration (FWMC) was 10.8 ppb, which is 1.1 ppb higher than the long-term limit of 9.7 ppb. Melissa Martin's presentation to the TOC at the February meeting provided detailed information about this. The final USGS data did not change the compliance status for WY2014, and there were no known QA issues associated with the result. The principals have been informed about the data.

No further analysis or discussion is needed at the TOC meeting. Principals will now consider technical recommendations from TOC representatives to decide what to do, and this will be discussed at the July TOC meeting.

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Action Item #1: TOC representatives will consult with their principals regarding how to address the exceedance and move forward, and will be prepared to discuss at the July TOC meeting.

Associated Online Documents:

- [Settlement Agreement Report, July–September 2014, WY2014 Annual Shark River Slough Compliance Presentation](#)
- [Final Shark River Slough TP Tracking Report, Third Quarter 2014](#)
- [Provisional Shark River Slough TP Tracking Report, Fourth Quarter 2014](#)

10:30 a.m. **3. Fourth Quarter 2014 Settlement Agreement Report** – Stuart Van Horn, SFWMD

Stuart Van Horn presented results for the fourth quarter of 2014 (October–December). In October, the Refuge geometric mean total phosphorus (TP) concentration was 7.9 ppb, which is higher than the long-term level of 7.2 ppb. Levels came down in November and December. TP values for Taylor Creek and Coastal Basins for the quarter were below the long-term limit and guidelines.

For the first quarter of 2015 (January to March), provisional Refuge data for January reflect a mean TP concentration of 8.1 ppb, which will be higher than the long-term level if final data values are the same. The principals have seen the newly-available data. Overall, the Refuge trend over the years is very good, despite occasional exceedances.

Associated Online Documents:

- [Settlement Agreement Report, Third Quarter 2014 \(July–September 2014\)](#)
- [Settlement Agreement Report, Fourth Quarter 2014 \(October–December 2014\)](#)
- [Settlement Agreement Report, Fourth Quarter 2014 Presentation](#)
- [Quality Assessment Report for Water Quality Monitoring, Fourth Quarter 2014](#)
- [Refuge TP Compliance Table, Fourth Quarter 2014](#)
- [Provisional Shark River Slough TP Tracking Report, Fourth Quarter 2014](#)

10:50 a.m. **(Not on Agenda) Update on Sub-Committee for Dealing with Large Data Gaps** – Kyle Douglas-Mankin, USFWS

Kyle Douglas-Mankin indicated that members of the sub-committee met, are making progress looking at options for dealing with missing data, and will give an update at the next meeting.

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10:52 a.m. **(Not on Agenda) Upcoming USGS Conversion of Stage Data from NGVD29 to NAVD88** – Stuart Van Horn, SFWMD

Stuart Van Horn mentioned the upcoming conversion of USGS stage data from NGVD29 to the NAVD88 elevation standard, and noted that the USGS may implement the change within the next year. The slight differences between the two elevation standards could cause 0.1 to 0.2 ppb differences in compliance limit calculations. Melissa Martin offered to have a sub-team investigate, and Stuart suggested having someone from the USGS come to update the TOC on the conversion and the timeline for completing it.

Action Item #2: Melissa Martin will follow-up with USGS for more information about the timing for the conversion of USGS stage data from NGVD29 to NAVD88, and will request an update for a future TOC meeting.

10:55 a.m. **4. Overview of Changes to S5A Complex** – Sean Williams, SFWMD

Sean Williams presented a high-level overview of changes to the S-5A complex and explained the function of the complex and its relationship to the L-8 FEB project. Planned operations are for the L-8 FEB to minimize excessive flows to the STAs and provide water when levels are low. Excess water would go into the FEB instead of to the Refuge and other areas. Water from the Refuge is not intended to go to the FEB.

Associated online documents:

- [Overview of Changes to S5A Complex](#)

11:15 a.m. **5. Update on a) S-356 Increment 0 Pump/Mechanical Test, b) S-356 Increment 1 Pump Test, c) 355 A/B, and d) 2.6 Mile Tamiami Trail Bridging Project** – Frank Powell, FDEP, and Sean Smith, USACE

Frank Powell and Sean Smith gave an update on the regulatory status of these structures and construction projects:

S-356 Increment 0 and Increment 1 Tests:

USACE is responsible for construction and operation of S-356, which is a 500 cfs, four-pump system. The station has not been operated since 2006, and is undergoing repairs that are expected to be completed this month. “Increment 0” and “Increment 1” are phases associated with operational testing of the pump station. Currently, USACE has all authorizations from state parties to move forward with the two tests.

The Increment 0 test is a one-time, 21-consecutive-day test of the post-repair mechanics of the station, and is expected to begin in May. If all criteria are met and conditions allow, the Increment 1 test is expected to be initiated in July.

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S-355 A/B:

These structures are located on the north side of the L-29 canal along the L-29 levee, just south of WCA-3B. Construction was completed in the 1990s, and interim operation was discussed in 1999. FDEP provided multiple test provisions associated with the structures for exercising the gates and providing high water relief throughout the period.

Recently, FDEP has received reasonable assurances from USACE and has been working with the USACE, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and SFWMD to fine-tune the open/close criteria for the structures. There has previously been a discussion about how water quality concentrations and flows provided from the gates would be included in the Appendix A calculation if the gates are actually operated.

Currently, USACE has a draft permit for internal review. After that, the USACE will provide comments to FDEP to address. This will be followed with a Notice of Intent to issue the permit, which has a 30-day public notice process. If there are no issues raised during this time, the final permit will be issued for perpetual operations of the structures.

2.6-mile Bridging Project:

FDEP issued a CERPRA permit to FDOT and DOI for the project. It is not a single structure, but two separate bridges divided by Safari Park. The first bridge is approximately 1.3 miles long, and the second bridge 1.1 miles. The project extends from east to west, with two approaches and two descents. It is located just east of the S-333 structure, and just west of the S-355A structure. Frank was unsure of the expected start date for construction, but noted that once it begins it should take 3.5 to 4 years to complete.

11:30 a.m. **6. Update of the Appendix A Subteam** – Stuart Van Horn, SFWMD

Stuart Van Horn provided an update on the Appendix A subteam, noting that the principals met on December 18 and April 10, and the sub-team last met on January 27. At the sub-team meeting, members worked on an initial list of change conditions, organized into five main categories: 1) Monitoring Challenges, 2) Changes in Operations, 3) Data Sets Available, 4) Operational Experience/Variability, and 5) Ecosystem Changes. The team organized about 37 items under these categories.

On April 10, the principals asked the sub-team to update the list with changes and some additional ideas, and to report back to decide on next steps. The next sub-team meeting may be held in May or June.

11:35 a.m. **7. Public Comment**

There were no further requests for public comment.

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11:37 a.m. **8. TOC Closing Business** – Juli LaRock, SFWMD

The next two quarterly meetings are scheduled for July 28 and October 27, 2015. Special meetings were not requested.

Juli LaRock reviewed the action items and adjourned the meeting.